

K. England Militia

A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
E X P E D I E N C Y
O F A
National Militia.

W I T H
P R O P O S A L S for Raising and Sup-
porting a Military Force sufficient for
our Security at home: To be furnished by
the several Counties, after the manner of
Militia, and continually employed in the
Service of the Publick, *without any addi-
tional Expence to the Subject.*

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National Public

H T I W

PROPOSALS for Rating and Taxation

1894

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A N

E S S A Y, &c.

THE Business of a Militia, which now so much engages every one's Attention, is an Affair of the utmost Importance. Experience, however, has shewn, that no Dependence can be placed on it, as modelled at present. The Introduction of Regulations, though necessary, must of Course be attended with some Difficulties; and if great Care is not taken to keep an equal Ballance of Power in the Body-Politick; or, as recommended from the Throne, if the framing of a Militia be

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not planned and regulated with equal
 Regard to the just Rights of the Crown
 on the one Hand, and of the People on
 the other, an Alteration may be produc-
 tive of the most dreadful Consequences.

We know that the Contest about the
 Militia, though not the sole Cause of the
 civil War, was the most immediate Oc-
 casion of kindling it into a Flame, which
 proved the Destruction not only of Mo-
 narchy, but of Liberty, and the Consti-
 tution. A military Force, for Defence
 against a foreign Invasion, is necessary
 to the very Being of this and every other
 Nation; and though, from the peculiar
 Happiness of Great Britain, as an Island,
 we are less exposed to foreign Insults
 and Incurfions, than most other Parts
 of Europe; yet it begins now to be uni-
 versally acknowledged, that a powerful
 Land-Force, of some Kind or other, is
 become requisite for our Preservation,

as

as the King of France has continually large Bodies of Troops almost within sight of our Coasts, and but a few Hours Sail from them: so that nobody now thinks it impossible for small Bodies of French Troops to land and give us some Disturbance, by setting Fire to different Parts of the Kingdom at the same Time; nor are they without sufficient Opportunities for escaping the Vigilance of our Fleets, in Fogs, Calms, and dark Nights; the very Winds, that would favour their Descent on us, might lock up our Fleets in our own Harbours *.

We find that our standing Forces are thought to be only sufficient for our Defence against such small Numbers of the French as may thus happen to be smug-

* It has been said, that when the Prince of Orange came to be our Deliverer, the very Elements fought for him, and suffered not the English Navy to approach him.

gled in upon us; and that even the Aid of foreign Mercenaries, which has so frightened our People, has not been thought sufficient to frighten our Enemies.

For, to strike Terror into the French, and effectually to secure ourselves, a great Part of our Navy has been employed hitherto merely to guard our Coasts.

Thus have we been obliged to give up the Advantage of our Superiority at Sea, and to let slip the fairest Opportunity for destroying the Ships and ruining the Trade of the French, (besides leaving some of the most valuable of our Possessions abroad in too defenceless a State) only because we were not in a *Condition* to face such an Army, even on our own Ground, as might possibly be brought against us, if our Coasts had been left
more

more open, and the Enemy had been hardy enough to risk all the Dangers of the Sea, and hazard an Attack from our Land-Forces, whilst they were under the Confusion that is unavoidable in disembarking.

But the Increase of the naval Power of this our most inveterate Enemy, exposes us more than ever to the Danger of a very formidable Invasion, by a large Army; notwithstanding our naval Force is at present superior to it. For if they have the Means in their Hands to obtain such an Accession to their Power as the Union with a Spanish Fleet would give, or if any Disgrace should happen to us again, like that which has befallen our Fleet in the Mediterranean, by an Admiral being more anxious about saving his Ships than saving the Nation: In either of these Cases, which are at least supposable,

able,

able, we can only have Recourse to Land-Forces; and therefore nobody hesitates in acknowledging the Necessity of such an Augmentation of our military Power as may prepare us for an Event so disastrous; though we are not agreed as to the Method most proper for the Purpose.

A national Militia, which is so earnestly desired, and so heartily addressed for by the Majority of the People, demands proper Consideration; tho' some amongst us, who reason very speciously, and draw their Remarks from History and Observation, insist on the great Danger of placing the military Force in the Body of the People, who, 'tis said, would be ungovernable, if entrusted with Arms, which thro' the Influence of Faction and Prevalence of Party-Rage, might introduce Cruelty and Confusion, and terminate

minate in the Disappointment at least, if not in an unconstitutional Subjection, of the deluded People.

Again, it is said, that a warlike Spirit, how commendable soever in some Instances, would be found inconsistent with the Spirit of Industry; and this has led many People to question, whether, in this trading Country, a serviceable Militia can be formed, without the utmost Prejudice to our Trades and Manufactures.

The Argument also of Danger to the Government, without a proper military Force to support it, is earnestly pressed by others, who insist, that as regular Troops only can be sufficient against Insurrections, regular Troops are likewise the only secure Defence against the common Enemy: That we might put our Trust in a Militia, if our foreign

reign Neighbours had nothing but Militia to bring against us : That though Englishmen are unquestionably as brave by Nature as Frenchmen, and always shewed themselves so, when the Armies of both Nations were only composed of Militia* ; yet, now, as the French King and all the Princes of the Continent make it their Study, and employ their Treasures to render themselves terrible to their Neighbours, in maintaining large Bodies of regular disciplined Troops, it would be Madness in us to put our Trust in any Militia that should not be equal in Point of Discipline to their best regulated Troops.

Such is the Diversity of Opinions concerning a Militia, and so uncertain

* A few Ages ago there was no such Thing in Europe as what we now call a standing Army ; there was nothing but Militia in any Country ; but now there is not a sovereign State but keeps up a Body of regular Troops.

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are the Consequences, that 'tis no Wonder our Legislators proceed in this Matter with the utmost Circumspection.

The Possibility of destroying our Constitution, by erecting a new Power that may prove superior to the Civil Power, and become the Cause of its Overthrow, would perhaps for ever prevent the Experiment of a Militia, if the present important Crisis did not compel the Government to have Recourse to some such Expedient. And indeed the Exigency of Affairs seems to have reduced our Legislators to this Alternative; either to pursue a Measure so disagreeable to the People as raising in a short Time * a very large

* Though Laws may be framed that will expedite the raising of Recruits, yet Length of Time, and some Experience, is necessary to make them good Soldiers.

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Army

Army at an immense Expence; (for the Power of the King and Parliament to do this cannot be questioned) or else to risque all the unforeseen Consequences of a Militia, and introduce the Use of Arms, and revive a martial Spirit among the People : For the taking foreign Mercenaries into our Pay, and bringing them over to defend our Coasts, reflects such Dishonour on the Nation, and is so odious to the People, that it will scarcely be attempted again by any Ministry.

The Restoration of the Militia in some new Form, to be rendered serviceable, has been several Times attempted before now, and some of the ablest Heads of the past and the present Times have been employed in framing a Plan for it : But the Difficulty of contriving a commodious Militia-Scheme for such a Government as ours, has perhaps hitherto

therto prevented the Undertaking from being successful.

By the Generality of People indeed this Matter has been treated as the easiest Thing in the World to be settled. A great deal has been said about a constitutional Militia *, restoring martial Discipline, and reviving a warlike Spirit among the People; and then every Thing would be right, and they would do all the Business.

Addressees for these good Purposes have been signed perhaps by Thousands, who we may charitably suppose, know not what they ask; for surely they do not desire to be subjected to a personal Attendance at the Place of Rendezvous, on

* By the antient Constitution of the Government the King had at his Disposal the Militia of the Realm, who were kept in constant Discipline and Exercise.

every Summons of the Lord-Lieutenant of a County, or whoever is by the Ministry appointed to the Command; and this perhaps merely for the Sake of learning an Exercise, or for performing it at a Review; which must be submitted to by every effective Militia; and such a Power thereby unavoidably lodged in the Crown over the Persons of Men as would be thought inconsistent with our Liberties: For a constitutional Militia being the Object in View, this necessary Power is incontestably in the King, it not being imaginable that a greater Power should be invested in the Hands of any Subject than is trusted in the Hands of the King*.

For

* The Parliament, in 1642, pretended to infer from the King's Conduct, that he had Designs to render himself absolute; and that the only Way to hinder such Designs was to put the Militia into safe Hands, independent of the King, and thereby prevent his having any Power over the Militia. But

Rapin

For Master-Tradesmen, Manufacturers, Shopkeepers, &c. to have large Fines imposed on them for Non-attendance, would be thought very oppressive; and to compel Gentlemen, Yeomen, and Farmers to attend at all Times, or even to accept of Commissions in the Militia, would be deemed a greater Hardship than submitting to any Tax for the Support of regular Troops, and would soon produce Petitions for Relief from such Burthens, and for a yearly re-establishing of such Numbers of standing Forces as the Parliament may find it necessary to appoint.

But let us suppose these Difficulties to be removed, and the Militia suit-

Rapin says, that the Parliament did not deny that, in the ordinary Course of Government, the Right of settling the Militia, and appointing those who were to command it under him, was solely in the King.

Tind. Con. Rapin, Folio, Vol. II. P. 430.

able

able to the present Times, and resembling the antient Militia † in nothing but the Name; those only to attend a Muster whose Convenience it may suit; that no Man who can find one to serve for him shall be obliged to serve in Person; —will not such a Militia of course consist of the lowest and meanest of the People, greatly deficient with respect to true Courage, unequal in Size, different in Dress: in short, of such Wretches as would be cheaply hired, because indigent *.

But

† What we call antient Militia were regular well-disciplined Troops: Every Man who was not a Vassal was a Soldier, bred to Arms, and obliged to follow his Lord to the Wars whenever it was required of him.

* The Muster of such a Militia must make a Scene little better than Dryden has humorously described it:

- ‘ And raw in Fields the rude Militia swarms;—
- ‘ Mouths without Hands, maintain’d at vast Expence:
- ‘ In Peace a Charge, in War a weak Defence.
- ‘ Stout, once a Year, they march a blustering Band;
- ‘ And ever, but in Times of Need, at Hand.

‘ Of

But, to set it in a better Light, suppose these Substitutes, perhaps of Indolence, are not permitted to rank in the Militia; that we have a great many brave Gentlemen and Yeomen, besides common People who depend upon their Labour for Subsistence, as personally brave as any People in the World, and would as willingly face an Enemy in the Defence of their Country: Yet hardly one of them would know how to do his Duty in a Squadron or Battalion *, and consequently must fall

‘ Of seeming Arms they make a short Essay,
‘ Then hasten to get drunk, the Bus’ness of the Day.’

* Notwithstanding the Descriptions that have been given of the Bravery and Intrepidity of the American Militia, which led People to expect great Things from them, we find that every Indian Incurfion alarms them, and makes them call out for Assistance from England.

An ingenious Gentleman, in Itinerant Observations in America, says, ‘ That wherever you travel in Maryland (as also in Virginia and Carolina) you

fall into Confusion as soon as engaged in Action with a well-trained disciplined Army, that can change its Situation, and alter its Disposition, in a Moment, at you are constantly astonished at the Number of Colonels, Majors, and Captains, that you hear mentioned: In short the whole Country seems at first to you a Retreat of Heroes; but alas! to behold the Musters of their Militia, would induce a Man to nauseate a Sash, and hold a Sword for ever in Derision. Diversity of Weapons and Dresses, Unsizeableness of the Men, and want of the least Grain of Discipline in their Officers or them, render the whole ridiculous and contemptible.

Are we then to place our Confidence, on every Emergency, in such Militia, collected at Random, as the present State of the Nation would furnish, which would either be composed of the very lowest and most abandoned of the People, influenced by no Spirit of Bravery or Liberty, and regardless of the Fate of the Nation, having themselves nothing to lose; or of such Tradesmen, and others, who, when compelled to this Service, would very reluctantly quit the Occupations and Manufactories they were already employed in, to the so much superior Benefit of the Nation and of themselves?

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the Command of the General, and still preserve Regularity and Order.

From all this we may conclude, that it is necessary for Men to be well disciplined, as well as brave, in order to constitute a serviceable military Power.

That answering at a Roll-calling in a Country Church-yard, and going thro such Exercise as may there be performed by a Handful of Men, will not make even a courageous Man a good Soldier, according to the modern Methods of fighting.

That it requires two or three Years for a brave and tractable Man to attain to a sufficient Knowledge of this fighting Business, to be Master of his Trade.

And that it is impossible to make the common People learn it, much less practise it (as it is not their Profession, and

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none

none of them live by it) unless military Tenures are restored, or a select Part of the People are appointed to the Service, and paid for it.

And, notwithstanding any Laws that may be made for assembling them, and for furnishing them with Arms, such Men who have been from their Infancy bred up in Ease and Security, without being ever exposed to Danger, will be too apt to save themselves the Trouble of practising military Exercises ; and, for Want of Experience in them, will be liable to be defeated and dispersed at the Approach of a brave foreign Enemy.

In short, there requires no more to convince us of the Pusillanimity of a modern Militia, than their Behaviour in the two last Rebellions.

In November 1715, when the northern Rebels came from Penrith to Appleby,

pleby, it was expected that the *Posse Comitatus*, and the Militia of Cumberland and Westmoreland, which, by the Care and Vigilance of the Earl of Carlisle, and the Lord Viscount Lonsdale, had been gathered together, to the Number of three or four thousand Men, would have made a Stand; but, notwithstanding the Encouragement they received from those two noble Lords, and from the Half-pay Officers, who were ready to head them, they all betook themselves to their Heels upon the Approach of the Rebels. Thus near double the Number ran away before those who were themselves little better than Militia, and who fled soon after before General Carpenter, though they were double the Number of his Forces. And every one knows that a Parcel of rascally Highlanders, in Number about four or five thousand, march'd in the last Rebellion through Millions of People,

into the Heart of England, without meeting with any Resistance; though they ran back again as fast as possible at the Approach of the regular Troops: But the Train'd-bands of any County attempted nothing; nor were they any where assembled except in Middlesex and in Kent.

But it will be said, that a Militia, which is so generally become the Cry, that it seems the Voice of the People, is not to be our sole Support and Defence; that a sufficient Number of regular Troops must be kept up to answer the Purposes of the Government, for Guards and Garrisons, and to quell Insurrections; and, in Time of War, to co-operate with the Militia against the common Enemy.

It may be presumed, that the severe martial Laws which are found to be necessary for the well governing of the Army,

Army, will not be extended to the Militia; nor the same Exactness of Discipline, and the Observation of nice Punctilios, be expected from the best Train'd-bands: Will not therefore great Disorder and Confusion arise among Troops governed by military Laws and Customs so very different? Will not the regular Troops, knowing their own Superiority, despise the Militia; and, in return, the Militia treat regular Soldiers with Insolence and Contempt, as more subject to the Authority of Superiors, and who cannot run Riot with Impunity like Militia-men? Have we not Reason to fear that there are some who would rejoice at an Opportunity of making Distinctions between the Crown Army and the Country Army; and, if these regular and irregular Troops were to serve together in all the Operations of War, would not those

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Distinctions create such great Animosities between the two Sorts of Troops, that they would be as likely to attack one another as to unite in attacking the Enemy * ?

But, as all the Arguments that can be urged to convince us that no Dependence can be had on irregular Troops, seem to be industriously spread every Day, with a Design to reconcile us to an Army, either of foreign or native Mercenaries, is it not to be feared that if our Hopes and Expectations from the Militia are turned into a Diffidence of it, that the Nation may be carried into the other Extream, and have Recourse to such an Army, as our dernier Resort ?

* Vid. A Pamphlet just published, on the Subject of Militias, entitled, *A Word in Time to both Houses of Parliament* ; in which, among many exceptionable Passages, are some that deserve the serious Attention of the Public.

—And

—And in this View all the Expence of supporting, and Danger of trusting, any Army composed of the Subjects of Great Britain, and those in Alliance with us, will be disregarded, in Comparison with the more dreadful Fate of submitting to a French one, and the Sacrifice that in consequence of it must certainly be made of our Lives, Properties, Laws, Liberty, and Religion, to the despotic Power of a French King, or the arbitrary Will of a tributary Viceroy, with a pretended divine Title, and hereditary Right to enslave us.

Supposing the disagreeable Circumstance of having foreign Assistance to be over, we may consider a standing Army of Natives to protect us, as being as much preferable to a foreign Army, that would keep us in Subjection to a Tyrant: Yet the being reduced to the Necessity of forming large Armies, even
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of those who are Members of the same Society, (and have therefore an Interest in, and Regard for, the Prosperity of the Kingdom) and making them a distinct Body, and the Profession of Arms their only Employment, is an Event justly to be feared, on account of the Danger we are exposed to of becoming a Prey to those we hire for our Defence, as they are not in the Power of the People, if themselves will oppose it.

If ever it becomes necessary to keep up a standing Army sufficient to repel such Numbers of French as may be poured in upon us, as in case of our Coasts being left open, or of their Superiority in a Sea-Engagement or two, the Effect of such an Alteration must be very considerable; for, though our Trades and Commerce might flourish, and the Honour and Power of the Nation might be preserved, with respect
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to Foreign Concerns, as it was under Oliver Cromwell, yet the internal Frame of our Government must be shaken; the additional Weight and Influence that raising, quartering, Payment of, and appointing Officers to so large an Army, will probably give to the Crown, must either destroy British Freedom and Independency, (the Glory and Boast of those who enjoy it, and Envy of Foreigners) or so alter its Nature, that tho' the Name may be retained, the Reality will be lost.

The certain Consequences of keeping up so large an Army, tho' fatal ones may be expected, cannot, however, be foretold; and though the Liberties of the Subject would be in the utmost Danger, yet perhaps it might prove no permanent Security to the Crown *. And, though

*Every King of Great Britain would perhaps have more to fear than to hope from a large standing
 E Army,

though some Nations in Europe have been deprived of their Liberties, by Armies that were devoted to the Will of their Prince; yet the Examples of former Times allow us to hope, that amongst British Troops, a Regard for their Country, and a Spirit of Liberty, will for ever prevail; that they will always behave like the Army in the Reign of King James, and nobly disdain to enslave their Country.

After all, as there is no Danger so great to contend against, as the exorbitant Power of a numerous Army, whether composed of Foreigners or of Natives, whether commanded by a crowned Head, or by Generals of its own setting up, let us dispassionately consider the Necessity there is to oppose

Army, if he was to aim at arbitrary Power, as they would either refuse to fight against their Country, or would more probably join the People against his tyrannical Government.

all

all farther Extension of mercenary Troops, as well as to discourage a Reliance on any such Militia as has hitherto been proposed, for the Defence of every Thing that can be dear to a free People.

As every true Englishman, Lover of his Country, is sensible that we now have Liberty and Privileges to take Care of, as well as a common Enemy to guard against; and desires both to provide a Security for those invaluable Blessings, and to see his Country in a good Posture of Defence; he will therefore be pleased to have any practicable Method proposed which may prove the happy Medium between the Danger, on one Hand, of introducing arbitrary Power as the Prerogative of the Crown, supported by such a mercenary Army; or, what is worse, the Subversion of Monarchy, and our Subjection to a military Government;

vernment: and the Danger, on the other Hand, of popular Commotions, Seditions, and Infurrections, by putting Arms into the Hands of all the People promiscuously, in Pursuance of such a Militia Scheme, who, having the Power, would never want a Pretence for what they would call doing themselves Right, which would soon involve us in all the Horrors of Anarchy.

It is, however, little better than Declamation, to set forth the Thoughts of private People on the best Means of publick Defence. His Majesty has pointed out a national Militia as one good Resource in case of general Danger; which Militia, well modelled, is by the honourable the House of Commons declared to be one proper Security for his Majesty's Person and Realm; and may best tend to the Satisfaction of the People. But as no Plan for establishing a Militia

is yet known to be settled ; or even, if the Wisdom of Parliament has laid the best-regulated Scheme that is possible ; yet, as it is not made publick, every Individual, if not in Duty bound (in Cases tending to the Good of the Nation) to lay what he may think a proper Expedient before the Publick, is at least at Liberty to offer his Sentiments : Especially as nothing on the Subject has yet appeared that is unexceptionable, or that has met with general Approbation. Notwithstanding every Proposal may have its Defects, some skilful Hand, it may be hoped, will correct the Errors of others, and, from the whole, form so perfect a Plan as will provide for our Defence and Security, without distressing our Trade, without drawing away Hands from our Manufactures, without endangering the Liberty of the Subject, or Prerogatives of the Crown, and may induce his Majesty and the Parliament to
pass

pass it into a Law. As no Measures but such as are adequate to the Purpose ought to be pursued, and as it has so often been proved that no Militia is fit for the important Work of national Defence, but what is in all Respects a Match for any equal Number of regular Troops that can be brought against it; therefore no Scheme deserves publick Countenance and Protection but such as proposes the arming and disciplining the hardiest and most robust of his Majesty's Subjects, who, from frequent Use, may become as expert in the Arts, and, from constant Labour and good Pay, be as well enabled to go through the Fatigues, of War as the best disciplined Troops in the World.

It may be objected that such Troops would not be a Militia, but Soldiers, to all Intents and Purposes, as much as any
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in the World. So they ought to be, or they are not fit to be relied on. But why are they not likewise Militia? Soldiers by Profession are comparatively but a modern Invention, and there is no doubt but the antient Militia-men were as well versed in the Warfare of those Times as the best Soldiers are now: They all learned the then Art of War from their Youth; and, if there are such Improvements made within an Age or two in the Arts of destroying our Fellow-Creatures, the Men who are to preserve us ought, by frequent and constant Exercise, and strict Discipline, to be made Masters of those Arts, though they may never be employed but in our Defence.

It has been lately said, that ‘ our
 ‘ standing Army is in Effect but a re-
 ‘ gular Militia; Part of the People, paid
 ‘ by the People, and reduced and dis-
 ‘ banded

‘ banded by the People ;’ * and as the having a Militia well-regulated, well-disciplined, or, as it has sometimes been expressed, having a sufficient Militia, can mean very little short of Perfection in the Exercise of a Soldier ; the Publick may, if it avails itself of the present happy Disposition of the People, form an Army of complete Troops, raised and maintained as a Militia, (preserving a near Resemblance to that which is already formed in the Ideas of the People) that will be the most capable of hard Service, and the Fatigues of War of any Troops in the World, such as will answer all the good Purposes of a standing Army, and at the same Time be very serviceable to the Publick in other Capacities besides fighting. If no better Method offers for this Purpose, that which is intended to be hereby proposed may take Place, and is therefore humbly submitted

* WORD IN TIME to both Houses of Parliament.

to

to the Consideration of the Publick,
viz.

That all Statute Labour on the publick Roads shall be compounded for, and Money raised on the People, in lieu of it; and that for the future all the Work on the Roads shall be performed by able Men, chosen by the People, and to be paid according to the common Rate of Labour.

That all such Men, being the Servants of the Publick, and maintained by it in so particular a Manner, must devote themselves to its Interest; and shall be liable, from the Time they are first appointed, to serve it in a military Capacity.

That, as by the Laws in force every Householder, Cottager, and Labourer, is obliged to work on the Roads, or

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contribute

contribute Eighteen-pence per Day, for every such Person under the Age of fifty, and above eighteen, shall be liable to be chosen for a Militia-Man at the Vestry of any Parish where he shall happen to reside, but shall be intitled to his Discharge after having served a certain Number of Years.

That such Men shall be enrolled in Companies, and act both in their military Capacity, and other * Employment, under the Direction of the Officers that may be properly appointed to discipline and govern them.

That a large Proportion of such Militia shall form Troops of Cavalry, to be

* Some States in Europe have employed Engineers of the first Note, with very large Salaries, in making Roads; surely subaltern Officers, if well paid for it, need not disdain to inspect the Labour of their Men, and to plan and form any publick Work.

mounted

mounted on, and to break, in the necessary Manner, all the Horses that are to be employed in the Repair of the Roads.

That proper Days be set apart for the Exercise of this Militia in small Companies, and for collecting together large Bodies, in order to practise them in their Duty when formed into Battalions, that by Use they may become alert; and there is no room to doubt of their being brave.

That the Labour on the Roads shall be performed as much as possible in Companies, to be separated at no great Distance from the Head-Quarters.

That, as soon as the Exigencies of the State will permit, as many of the Individuals of his Majesty's Troops as can be spared shall be incorporated with this

Militia, for the Sake of forwarding exact Discipline.

That Draughts shall be made, from Time to Time, of such Numbers as the Government shall think fit, in every County, to be taken off from a great Part of the Labour on the Roads, for the Sake of attaining to higher Degrees of Perfection in the military Art.

That the Parliament shall appoint, from Year to Year, the precise Number that shall be entirely exempt from this Labour, for the Purposes of Guards and Garrisons.

That as the private Men in his Majesty's Guards, &c. shall happen to die, become old and infirm, or be discharged, they shall be always replaced by Draughts from this Militia.

That

That proper Regulations be made :
 That such Men as shall from Time to Time be newly appointed to serve in this Militia, and such Horses as may be fresh bought, shall be employed in the more private Roads ; and that they advance forward, as they become more perfect.

That every Parish, in the united Kingdoms, shall chuse such a Number of Men, and bear such a Proportion of the Charge as the Value of their Lands shall amount to, on an equal Rate ; that is to say, three Pounds a Year, to be collected for every fifty Pounds per Annum in Houses or Land, and smaller Bargains in Proportion, down to ten Pounds a Year, as an Equivalent for the six Days Work, at ten Shillings per Day, which the Laws in being lay on every fifty Pound per Annum.

That

That every other Person, now liable to work on the Highways, or to hire one in his Stead, pay fix Shillings a Year, as an Equivalent for the fix Days Statute-Labour that he is now liable to.

By such an Institution as this, the State might enjoy all the Advantage of Security against foreign Invasions, that it might derive from a large standing Army, and at the same Time avoid the Evils of it, great Expence, Luxury, and Debauchery; and, in consequence of the present idle Life of Soldiers, immense Detriment to the Publick from so many Hands unemployed in useful Labour; whereas, by this Method, one hundred thousand Men (above ten Men to a Parish, on an Average) would be constantly maintained and employed in improving the Roads, to the great Benefit of the Publick;

Publick : For the Soldiery have always been esteemed the best Makers of Roads.

As to the Number of Men to be raised by this Scheme, it is not necessary to be here exactly ascertained ; but if, according to the Value of the Lands in each Parish, there were to be appointed from two to twenty Militia-Men, to the Amount of ten Men, on an Average, to every Parish, it would raise nearly one hundred thousand Men ; for which Number ample Provision would be made, according to the Rate before mentioned.

The yearly Value of the Lands in England is now generally reckoned at twenty Millions *. Three

* If Dr. Davenant speaks Truth, the whole Rental of England, in the Year 1600, did not exceed six Millions, and the Price of Lands was at twelve Years Purchase. In 1688 the Rental was fourteen

Three Pounds per Annum
on every fifty Pounds in twenty
Millions would produce 1,200,000

Suppose the Number of
People in England to be eight
Millions, and that two Mil-
lions are liable to Statute-La-
bour, to be compounded for
at six Shillings each. - - 600,000

The Turnpikes * all over
England may be supposed to
produce yearly - - 100,000

1,900,000

fourteen Millions, and the Price of Land was eigh-
teen Years Purchase; so that, within this Period,
the landed Interest rose from seventy-two to two
hundred and fifty-two Millions. As Land now
yields at least one Third more, for twenty-seven
Years Purchase, twenty Millions cannot be thought
too much; the small Sum paid in many Parts of
England to the Land-Tax may be offered as ano-
ther Proof of it.

* Two hundred Turnpikes, each raising five
hundred Pounds yearly, will produce one hundred
thousand Pounds.

To this must be added the Sum granted yearly by Parliament, as the Exigencies of State require.

The Sum, already granted for maintaining forty-nine thousand effective Men, with Commission and Non-commission-Officers for the Service of the ensuing Year, amounts to 1,213,746

Also for the Pay of General and Staff-Officers. 47,000

3,160,746

To all this must be added the neat Produce of a Tax of this Nature in Scotland, at a Rate more easy to the Labourer, on Account of the Lowness of Wages there.

These Calculations are only in gross; the Nature of the Argument requiring

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no more, as this is sufficient to demonstrate that a Provision would be made for one hundred thousand Men, and a sufficient Number of Horses*, to be employed on the Roads only in Times of Peace, and for a Defence in Time of War; for, as one Million two hundred and twenty thousand Pounds is a Provision for about fifty thousand regular Troops, there would be, according to the above Calculations, about one Million nine hundred and ninety-three thousand to pay the other fifty thousand, and increase the Pay of such Regulars as may become incorporated with the Militia, to the full Sum of one Shilling per Day to

* It has been a strong Objection to most Militia Schemes, that proper Provision has not been made for raising Troops of Horse. The late Duke of Marlborough has been said to give it as his Opinion, that Cavalry would prevent the landing of an Enemy, by the Quickness of their Motions near the Coasts.

private

private Men ; for the Number of Field and Staff-Officers already appointed would perhaps be thought sufficient, and the Charges of Guards and Garrisons in Gibraltar, &c. would be yearly provided for by Parliament; four hundred and twenty-three thousand nine hundred and sixty-three Pounds being granted for defraying these Charges for this Year 1757.

The Advantage of having such a Number of Men as might be constantly employed on the Roads, are inconceivable, no small Part of which would be the taking away all Occasion for the most vexatious and oppressive Methods of Presentments, Indictments, and the Train of Expences consequent thereon, which there is scarce a Parish in the Kingdom but has felt in its Turn. This Method of repairing the Roads would soon put an effectual Stop to such Proceedings, as

every Person of the least Discernment must allow; for are not the publick Roads more likely to be kept good under the Direction of Gentlemen who would spend great Part of their Time about them, and have an almost absolute Command * of the Men employed, than under our common Supervisors, who generally want the requisite Knowledge and Experience, and, having other Business of their own, are desirous to be excused as much as possible from this Duty? It is notorious that some of them have been so incapable, that the

* Not that such Militia should be liable to the sudden and severe Punishments that are now inflicted on Soldiers by Courts Martial, except in Time of War; but Distinctions should be made between Times of Peace and Times of War; and martial Law, in its full Force, take Place only from the Declaration of War: The more free and easy Men are in their Circumstances, in Time of Peace, the more pleased they will be with their Situation, and the more eager to defend those Privileges they partake of.

Statute-

Statute-Labour of Parishes has done Mischief, instead of Good, through a Misapplication of the Materials they have used.

It has been observed of the Generals and Consuls who employed the robust and brave Armies of the Roman Empire in their publick Highways, as well as other Works of Use and Magnificence, that they contributed as much to the Honour of their Country, and employed their Soldiers as usefully, in Times of Peace, as in the Field of Battle. Would not such a Regulation soon produce the happiest Effects in England? If the Romans from being a Militia, of which every Individual made a Part, whilst the State was in its Infancy, found it inconvenient, after Arts and Manufactures gained Ground amongst them, to appoint select Numbers for the Profession of Arms, who were likewise employed

ployed in publick Works; why may not the Experiment be tried in Great-Britain? Are not the Romans a more proper Example than the Switzers?

The Baron de Montesquieu, observing that no Troops in the World were in any Age so well disciplined as the Romans, remarks, that they were enabled, by the Violence of their Exercises, and the wonderful Roads they built, to make such long and speedy Marches, that their sudden Presence damped the Spirits of their Opposers. The same ingenious Author says, 'Tis
 ' observed in this Age, that the immoderate Labour which Soldiers are obliged to undergo destroys our Armies;
 ' and yet 'twas by incredible Labour that the Romans preserved themselves. The
 ' Reason I take to be this: Their Toils
 ' were continual and uninterrupted,
 ' whereas our Soldiers are ever shifting
 from

' from the Extreame of Labour to the
 ' Extreame of Idleness; than which no-
 ' thing can possibly be more destructive.
 ' The Romans, thus inured, were ge-
 ' nerally healthy and vigorous: We do
 ' not find by Historians that their Armies,
 ' which waged War in so great a Variety
 ' of Climates, fell often a Prey to Dis-
 ' eases; whereas, in the present Age,
 ' we daily see Armies, without once
 ' engaging, perish and melt away, if I
 ' may use the Expression, in a single
 ' Campaign.'

By the constant Employment there-
 fore of the Militia, as hath been here
 recommended, in the open Air, either
 in this useful Work of improving the
 Roads, or in military Exercises, shall
 we not train up, from such a Nursery,
 the finest Army in the World? And is
 there not the greater Necessity for hav-
 ing Recourse to some such Method, as
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the King of Great-Britain has no Power (except a temporary one) for pressing Men into the Land Service? The Business of recruiting always goes on so slowly, that we might be subdued before we could raise, much less discipline, a compleat Army of such as we now call Volunteers *. Moreover, as every Augmentation of our standing Troops (as it is at present managed) brings Distress in some Degree on our Agriculture, and on every Sort of Manufacture; and as on the disbanding of an Army 'tis too frequently observed, that the Streets and Highways are pestered with Robbers, it may be a Means to prevent those In-

* Though the Method of appointing Men by the Majority of Votes in a Parish Vestry has the Appearance of Compulsion, yet are not many Men entrapped by base Arts; or frequently drawn into the Army by the Apprehensions of Punishment from the Civil Power, or the Fear of Creditors: to the Obstruction of Justice, and great Loss to some honest Members of the Society.

conveniencies,

conveniences, if we provide for our Armies both in War and Peace in such a Manner as that the Service shall be sought after for the Sake of such good Pay, and the Necessity of forcing People into it may be avoided. In a Word, if we desire to preserve our Freedom, let us not subject ourselves by a general Militia to a martial Law, which has always been found necessary for keeping the Militia in proper Subjection; nor, on the other Hand, let it be said, to our Shame, that the Soldiers of Great-Britain are in any respect inferior to those on the Continent. If we desire to be the most formidable People in Europe, (that is, considered in a defensive Light) and have a Regard for our Constitution, as settled at the Revolution, let us endeavour to procure a constitutional Militia in that Sense of the Word.

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If, by the present State of Affairs abroad, we are perhaps more than ever exposed to Danger, and are desirous of giving new Life and Vigour to our military Discipline, let us be extremely cautious that we do not injure our civil Constitution. Let the Parliament of Great-Britain appoint yearly, from some certain Source, the Number of effective Men necessary for our Defence, and for the Preservation of those inestimable Rights and Liberties which are the distinguishing Privilege of free-born Britons.



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